

INTRODUCTION

NEED FOR A COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN

Founded in 1852, Lutherville is one of the oldest settlements in Baltimore County, predating the County's incorporation (see Appendix A). Lutherville is an unique and eclectic mix of the past and present with a wealth of diverse historical resources and some attractive natural features. It is well located near major transportation routes with convenient access to jobs, stores, and community services.

The area represented by the Lutherville Community Association is bounded by Ridgely Road to the north, Interstate 83 to the west, Interstate 695, Seminary Avenue and Bellona Avenue to the South, and York Road to the east. Lutherville is defined as a Community Conservation Area in the Baltimore County 1989-2000 Master Plan. In addition, a substantial portion of the area is designated as a Baltimore County Historic District.

The Lutherville Community Association (LCA) has a well established history of involvement in community issues. However, with increasing pressures a more formal plan is needed. The long settled "neighborhoods" of Lutherville are facing encroachment of higher intensity uses on every front: retail and residential development along Seminary Avenue; office encroachment along Bellona Avenue near the Charles Street Beltway interchange; office, retail and light industrial uses in the Ridgely Road corridor; slowly intensifying retail and office use along York Road. These encroachments and the dramatic traffic increases associated with area-wide development are threatening the quality of life and the very essence of this long established historically residential community.

There are requests for higher intensity rezoning during each comprehensive zoning cycle. The Hunt Valley-Timonium Redevelopment Study established there should be no additional commercial encroachment upon Lutherville's residential community. These rezoning requests involve properties along the boundary areas of the community, as well as within its heart. Also of concern are development sites within the community: the College Manor Nursing Home property, the Bautz property and many smaller in-fill residential parcels. The community is also concerned about expansion of the Lutherville Fire Station and of the light rail stations and parking areas.

Lutherville residents recognize that development and change are inevitable and the forces of change represent both adversity and opportunity. Adversity, because in the absence of a Community Conservation Plan, inappropriate development will overtake the community, causing a permanent decline in the quality of life. Opportunity, because the implementation of a well defined Community Plan will help preserve and improve the character of this unique community. Active involvement of Lutherville residents and businesses in addressing the issues affecting our neighborhood is essential to the preservation of this community.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Community Plan for Lutherville has been developed by the LCA to assess critical issues and to define goals and an action plan. The key issues are: zoning and land use, traffic, pedestrian safety, environment, open space, recreation and preservation of the residential character of the community. The Lutherville Community Association is also the guardian of one of Baltimore County's premier Historic Districts, safeguarding this valuable resource for all county residents now and in generations to come. As such, the Plan also addresses issues related to preservation of the Historic District and the quality of new development.

The LCA is presenting this draft for discussion by community residents and businesses so that consensus can be achieved on the communities' goals and the action plan for achieving these goals. The revised Plan will be submitted to the Baltimore County Planning Board and the Baltimore County Council for adoption as an amendment to the Baltimore County Master Plan. When adopted, the Plan will provide guidance to the LCA, property owners, residents and businesses. It is also intended to help the LCA better communicate the community's concerns to elected representatives, to Baltimore County agencies (Planning and Zoning, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Environmental Protection, Board of Education, etc.) and to state agencies (Transportation, Natural Resources, Environment, the Maryland Historic Trust, etc.)

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Lutherville Community Plan (LCP) area is located in the Central Sector of Baltimore County, to the south of the Hunt Valley-Timonium Redevelopment Study (HV/T) area and north of the Towson Community Plan area. The HV/T Plan, adopted by the Baltimore County Planning Board on April 15, 1993, promotes the area located to the north of Lutherville as a more intensive office, industrial and mixed use development area. The area serves as a major employment center due to the existing zoning and land use patterns as well as the infrastructure that is in place. As of January 1993, the HV/T area employed over 10 percent of the County's total work force and about one fourth of the County's industrial workers. The Towson community Plan, adopted by the Baltimore County Council on February 3, 1992, has designated the area to the south of the Lutherville Community Plan area as a Community Conservation Area, Outer Neighborhood. This designation was developed in the 1989-2000 Baltimore county Master Plan in order "to maintain and enhance the physical, social and economic resources of the County's older, urban area communities."

Major transportation systems are located in proximity to the LCP area, i.e. Charles Street, York Road, I-695, I-83 and the Central light rail transit line. Seminary Avenue and Bellona Avenue serve as major collector roads which traverse the plan area. Along the south side of the plan area, the terminus of Charles Street at I-695 and the configuration of the Charles Street interchange contribute to traffic patterns that funnel traffic through the residential community between I-695 and Seminary Avenue and/or Ridgeley Road.

The major transportation systems have shaped the development of the Hunt Valley-Timonium employment center as well as the Lutherville community. They have provided significant benefits to both areas. While there are few undeveloped parcels in the HV/T area, redevelopment potential of under utilized parcels is very attractive and would allow the County to maximize its investment in the existing infrastructure. The Central light rail transit line, the extension of Warren Road to Beaver Dam Road with the construction of a partial interchange at I-83, the proposed Beaver Dam Road extension to Padonia Road and the construction of a connector road between Greenspring Drive and Aylesbury Road have greatly improved or will improve traffic circulation and accessibility within the HV/T area.

Lutherville, designated as a Community Conservation area in the 1989-2000 Baltimore County Master Plan, has the County's commitment to continue into the future as a strong, viable residential community. While growth and redevelopment will occur in the HV/T area to the north, it should occur in a manner that uses the regional transportation system and not the local neighborhood streets of Lutherville. A proposed Beltway stop for the Central light rail transit line should be designed with direct access to the Beltway and not local streets.

A transportation study is needed to consider additional transportation improvements to divert non-local traffic from Lutherville's neighborhood streets. The study will evaluate the major transportation network and will consider the most appropriate mechanisms to accomplish the aforementioned goal. The

study would enhance both the Lutherville National Register Historic District and the regional transportation network.